



Learning Is For Everyone, INC

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PRESS RELEASE

FIRST Tech Challenge Team Duct Tape Earns Spot in World Championship in Atlanta in April – Help them Get There!



Odessa - Team Duct Tape, an award winning FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) community based high school level robotics team from Odessa, FL, won the Connect Award, for their community outreach, and captained the Winning Alliance at the February 27 Florida State Champion at USF, earning one of only two spots in the FIRST World Championship in Atlanta in April.

Team Duct Tape, along with another Odessa team, Smoke and Mirrors, will be representing Florida at the FIRST World Championship April 14-17. The World Championship is the final and largest event of the FIRST LEGO League, FIRST Tech Challenge and FIRST Robotics Challenge competitions that are held nationwide and worldwide throughout the fall and winter. Team Duct Tape will be one of one hundred FTC teams from around the nation joining more than 10,000 students from around the world to compete at the Georgia Dome.





As in the local and state tournaments, World Championship teams will pit their robots against one another on a 12X12 foot playing field, earning points by releasing wiffle-type balls from a chute in an autonomous mode, and shooting balls into center, or into off-field goals. Matches are two and a half fast paced minutes long. Students receive awards for robot design and effectiveness, teamwork, community outreach, and overall character and demonstration of the

principle FIRST value of Gracious Professionalism. Students involved in FIRST robotics programs also have opportunities to earn any of over 740 scholarship opportunities totaling more than \$12 million.

In the past few weeks, Team Duct Tape members, who hail from several public, private and homeschools in the Odessa area, have represented FIRST robotics at the Lockheed Martin eWeek event in Orlando, at the Bay Area Renaissance Festival, and at the first ever TEDx Tampa Bay event. They have mentored younger FIRST robotics teams, and volunteered at FIRST LEGO League tournaments.

They, in turn, have been mentored by professionals in the community who have helped them develop engineering skills most students don't receive until college, including the use of computer assisted design programs like PRO/Engineer, prototyping, and sophisticated programming skills. Students use a combination of in person meeting time and online collaborative tools like Skype and Google Apps to coordinate work between meetings. Team members have been aided in their high tech education by mentors from local engineering firms like McCormick-Stevenson and support from organizations like the Florida West Coast Section of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and PTC.

The cost of going to the World Championship is significant, especially for a community based team of ten students with chaperones. Registration for the World Championship event is \$1000 and four days of food and lodging will incur expenses of nearly \$4000. Team members are happy and eager to earn community support and funding by visiting companies and organizations to talk about their work, and demonstrate their robot, as well as by providing tutoring and other academic assistance to other students, and anyone interested in learning more about FIRST robotics programs.

Team Duct Tape is sponsored, in part, by the non-profit education resource organization, Learning is for Everyone, which believes that all youth should have access to high quality STEM education and that every young person with an interest in math, science, and technology should have an opportunity to express and explore those interests. LIFE Inc.

seeks to bring high school level robotics as within reach as Scouting, and to make it as commonplace, accessible and fun as a pick up game of basketball.

Support for Team Duct Tape also comes from Tampa Technik, in St. Petersburg, Shurtech brands Duck Tape, and the Golf Car Depot in Land O' Lakes.

Please visit the team website at www.TeamDuctTape.com to learn more about Team Duct Tape, and to see how you can help this great group of high school students.

Learning is For Everyone, Inc. is a nonprofit 501 C(3) organization whose goal is to empower families and individuals with educational information resources on and off the web, and assistance through its activities in all aspects of education at all stages of life.

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